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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-fourth session
Item 161 of the preliminary list*
MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 13 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the English translation of the note verbale dated 12 April 1999 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of the Republic of Iraq in Tehran concerning the assassination of Major General Ali Sayyad Shirazi, Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by the Iraq-based MKO terrorist group on 10 April 1999 in front of his residence.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 161 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mehdi DANESH-YAZDI
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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ANNEX

Note verbale dated 12 April 1999 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Embassy of Iraq in Tehran

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of Iraq in Tehran and has the honour to state the following:

The terrorist group MKO, having its command headquarters in Baghdad, has claimed responsibility for the terrorist act resulting in the martyrdom of Major General Ali Sayyad Shirazi, one of the high-ranking commanders of the armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in front of his residence in Tehran on 10 April 1999.

In view of the fact that this group plans its terrorist acts in Baghdad and that such acts, which are disruptive of the security of Iraq's neighbouring country, the Islamic Republic of Iran, could not be planned without coordination with the Iraqi authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran protests strongly against hosting and organizing the MKO terrorist group as well as against provision of facilities to them and aiding and abetting them in carrying out terrorist acts, and calls upon the Government of Iraq to identify and extradite those responsible for masterminding this terrorist act and to desist from aiding, abetting and organizing this terrorist group.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reserves its right to legitimate defence with a view to safeguarding its security against terrorist acts.

United Nations A/54/79

General Assembly

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15 April 1999
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Fifty-fourth session
Item 39 of the preliminary list*
Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Letter dated 14 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith statements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the observer missions of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States (see annexes) on the presidential election held in Djibouti on 9 April 1999 which, as you are aware, took place without incident.

I should be grateful if you would have the statements circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 39 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Badri Ali **Bogoreh**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/54/50.

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Annex I

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation wishes to state that the second pluralist presidential election was held throughout the country on 9 April 1999 without incident.

The people of Djibouti have thus recognized the statesmanship and experience of Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh by entrusting to him, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the destinies of our nation.

The election of Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, who for 22 years was the principal collaborator of the founding father of the nation of Djibouti, Al Hadj Hassan Gouled Aptidon, represents a pledge of continued progress along the road of peace, democracy and national unity and harmony.

The people of Djibouti have once again demonstrated their maturity to the prophets of doom who constantly predicted the imminent outbreak of serious disturbances once the results of the presidential election were announced.

Annex II

Joint statement by the observer missions of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States on the conduct of the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti

Further to the request of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and Mr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Méguid, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and pursuant to their decision, three delegations were sent and mounted a combined observer mission to contribute to transparency in the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti.

The delegations noted how the election was organized in the course of various meetings with the authorities involved in the electoral process.

The delegations also held talks with the two candidates.

Teams formed by the delegations travelled throughout the District of Djibouti as well as to various localities in districts in the interior of the country as staffing permitted (District of Tadjourah: Tadjourah, Sagallou, Kalaf, Ardo, Randa; District of Obock: Khar-Angar, Lahasse; District of Ali-Sabieh: Ali-Sabieh, Gualileh). The teams covered over 100 polling stations of the 211 opened throughout the country.

On the basis of their observation of the organization and conduct of the ballot, the delegations wish to state:

(a) The electoral campaign, which the delegations in part observed, and the presidential election were held within the time-frame established by law and took place without incident;

(b) Electors came out in large numbers to choose their candidate in the secrecy of the polling booths;

(c) Efforts were made to maintain fairness and provide suitable physical conditions for the electors;

(d) The police in attendance confined themselves to maintaining law and order without interfering in the conduct of the ballot;

(e) The printing of polling cards and their distribution to registered voters took place in a completely satisfactory manner;

(f) The counting of the votes for both parties was carried out in a transparent and orderly manner.

Along with these positive comments, the delegations unanimously wish to draw attention to the following point: the opening and closing hours of some polling stations, both in the District of Djibouti and in the interior, were not observed for various reasons:

Late arrival of polling station staff;

Late opening of polling stations;

Contradictory information as to hours;

Insecurity;

Late arrival of materials.

The delegations also noted:

(a) An evident lack of training of electoral personnel, resulting in:

(i) The various stages of the ballot being conducted differently;

(ii) Confusion between the role of the representatives of the candidates and that of polling station staff as a result of a lack of awareness of the respective roles;

(iii) Failure at some polling stations to request identification in addition to the polling card;

(iv) Inappropriate use of electoral materials (failure to use indelible ink, especially in rural areas; non-use/inadequate use of card punch, etc.);

(v) Inadequate preparation of the electorate resulting in a lack of familiarity with the use of ballot papers and the polling booth;

(b) In terms of materials:

(i) Use of two types of ballot boxes, transparent in the District of Djibouti and wooden in the interior of the country;

(ii) Use of two types of ink: indelible ink in some districts and ordinary ink at some rural polling stations.

In conclusion, the three international observer missions wish to emphasize that, despite shortcomings in the organizational aspects as indicated, the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti took place in conditions in which transparency, impartiality and fairness prevailed. The delegations wish to thank the authorities and people of the Republic of Djibouti for the welcome and facilities placed at their disposal throughout their mission.

United Nations A/54/80

General Assembly

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Fifty-fourth session
Items 39, 50, 76 (c), 101 and 117 of the preliminary list*

Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

General and complete disarmament: establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia

Environment and sustainable development

Human rights questions

Letter dated 14 April 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Ashgabat Declaration (see annex I) and the joint statement by the heads of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted at the meeting of heads of State held on 9 April 1999 in Ashgabat (annex II).

* A/54/50.

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We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 39, 50, 76 (c), 101 and 117 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Akmaral **Arystanbekova**
Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Zamira **Eshmambetova**
Permanent Representative of Kyrgyzstan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Rashid **Alimov**
Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Aksoltan **Ataev**
Permanent Representative of Turkmenistan to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Alisher **Vohidov**
Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations

Annex I

Ashgabat Declaration

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, mankind is confronted with serious ecological problems that are impeding its stable development. Environmental degradation is the result of the irrational use of natural resources.

The consequences of the Aral crisis have had a negative impact on the quality of life of the Central Asian population, and the problem of providing social protection and ensuring clean drinking water has become more acute.

The States of Central Asia have been giving constant attention to improving the situation in the region and enlisting the help of the international community in solving these problems. Together with international organizations and funds, a regional project, "Management of Water Resources and the Environment", is being implemented with the support of the International Ecological Fund and is designed to bring about a radical improvement in the use of water and other resources, enhance the effectiveness and culture of nature management in the region and improve the ecological situation in general.

At the same time, the efforts being made to solve the problems of the Aral Sea basin are insufficient.

We, the Presidents of the fraternal States of Central Asia — the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan,

Moved by the desire to ensure our peoples prosperity and confidence in the future,

Conscious of the need to develop joint measures in carrying out a regional strategy and specific actions for making rational use of the region's water resources, founded on ecosystem-based and integrated principles of water management,

Taking into account the fact that the water resources of the Aral Sea basin must be used in the interests of all parties with observance of the principles of good-neighbourliness and mutual interests,

Emphasizing the significance of the efforts by the States that established the Fund in strengthening cooperation concerning the problems of water-resource management and environmental protection, restoring the water ecosystem and preventing the pollution of transboundary waters,

Confirming the decisions adopted on the joint implementation of the Concrete Action Programme for the Problems of the Aral Sea,

Recognizing that well-informed public opinion is an important condition for concerted action under the ecological and socio-economic policy conducted in the region,

Acting in accordance with the firm determination to overcome jointly the consequences of the crisis and improve the ecological situation in the Aral Sea basin,

Declare that we shall:

Recognize the importance of an overall solution to the problems related to improving the social and ecological situation in the Aral Sea basin;

Strengthen, in the States of the region and their missions abroad, activities designed to draw the attention of the international community to and attract resources and the potential

assistance of donor countries, funds and organizations for the implementation of programmes and projects relating to the problems of the Aral Sea basin;

Secure all possible assistance and support in the implementation, under the auspices of the World Bank and the International Ecological Fund, of the project "Management of Water Resources and the Environment in the Aral Sea Basin";

Accord greater attention to solving the problems of the mountainous areas where the rivers flowing into the Aral Sea basin originate;

Carry out a set of measures and projects in priority areas to provide social protection to the population living in the Aral Sea basin;

Step up work aimed at combating desertification and the pollution of transboundary waters;

Assist international organizations and institutes in their efforts to implement programmes and projects relating to the problems of the Aral Sea basin;

Promote, through educational and other programmes, efforts aimed at better informing the population about the urgent problems of environmental protection, rational nature management and improving the living environment for current and future generations.

For the Republic of Kazakhstan:
(*Signed*) N. A. **Nazarbaev**

For the Kyrgyz Republic:
(*Signed*) A. A. **Akayev**

For the Republic of Tajikistan:
(*Signed*) E. S. **Rakhmonov**

For Turkmenistan:
(*Signed*) S. A. **Niyazov**

For the Republic of Uzbekistan:
(*Signed*) I. A. **Karimov**

Ashgabat, 9 April 1999

Annex II

Joint Statement by the Heads of State of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekis a

A meeting of the Presidents of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan took place in Ashgabat on 8 and 9 April 1999.

The heads of State discussed the questions of restoring the ecosystem of the Aral Sea basin and the work carried out in this area by the foundation for the Salvation of the Aral Sea. The Ashgabat Declaration, setting forth the results of the discussion was signed (see annex I).

During the meeting, the heads of State conducted a comprehensive analysis of the state and prospects for the development of cooperation between the countries of the region in major policy areas, mutually advantageous economic ties, and social and cultural life as well as a thorough exchange of views on pressing problems of international relations.

On the basis of the results of the meeting held, the heads of State,

Determined to promote the further development and strengthening of existing relations based on all-round, equitable and mutually advantageous cooperation in the spirit of the friendship of their peoples, who have age-old historic roots and common culture, customs and traditions,

Emphasizing the high level of the friendly, equitable and mutually advantageous relations in all areas of inter-State relations, ensuring security and stability in the region,

Expressing the desire to strengthen further the independence of the States and their political and economic security, enhance the well-being of the peoples and promote the dynamic development of national economies on the basis of full and effective use of natural resources and the development of regional ties,

Emphasizing their commitment to the principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, the founding documents of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and mutually providing all-round support in questions relating to the prevention of threats to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of their countries,

Regarding as a major task the work of meeting the needs of the future generations of their citizens and imbuing young people with a spirit of patriotism, devotion and loyalty to higher humanistic and moral values, respect for the achievements of previous generations, a sense of responsibility for the fate of the fatherland and fraternal, good-neighbourly relations between the peoples of the region directed towards the new century,

Have declared the following:

1. Since Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan gained their independence, relations among them have been developing in accordance with the principles of traditional friendship and trust, sovereign equality and mutual advantage, based on long-term partnership and in keeping with the national interests of all five States. On the threshold of the twenty-first century, they believe that it is necessary to give new impetus to the development of mutually advantageous partnership on an equal footing and to the broadening of cooperation in the political, economic and socio-cultural spheres.

2. The sides confirmed their commitment to openness and broad cooperation with a view to ensuring international peace, stability and security at the regional and global levels. The sides are prepared to provide assistance in order to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations and other international organizations in maintaining universal peace and security, preventing conflicts and ensuring the internal and external security of States.

3. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan consider the promotion of a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan, the establishment of peace and accord in that country and the transition to the implementation of programmes to rehabilitate Afghanistan to be one of the most important tasks of regional politics.

The heads of State commended the latest efforts of the United Nations, within the framework of the Ashgabat process, to take practical steps to resolve the Afghan conflict. The heads of State attach great importance to the consultations being held within the framework of the "Group of neighbours and friends of Afghanistan (6 + 2)", and have appealed to the Afghan parties actively to pursue the process of a political settlement. The sides also welcome the efforts of other States to this end, including the initiative of Uzbekistan to convene a special meeting of the "6 + 2 Group" in order to support the coordinated efforts of the United Nations and the goodwill of the participants in the ongoing inter-Afghan dialogue.

4. The sides reaffirm that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia is in keeping with the requirements and interests of national, regional and global security.

5. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan shall take concerted action to counteract terrorism, all forms of political, national or religious extremism and any other attempts to change the political system or social order through non-constitutional means, or violate a State's territorial integrity, which pose a threat to the life and peace of the population and undermine the moral foundations of society.

6. Recognizing their special responsibility, on the eve of the third millennium, for the well-being of future generations, the heads of State shall consolidate their efforts to combat transboundary organized crime and illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances, as well as contraband and illegal arms trafficking.

7. The heads of State reaffirmed the steadfast commitment of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan to civil rights and liberties and to the democratic values embodied in the universally recognized norms of international law and the basic principles of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The Presidents noted their agreement that the democratic development of society is a complex, multi-stage process that takes account of the historical traditions, customs, cultures and spiritual values of the peoples of the Central Asian region.

8. The Presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, considering that water has always been a highly important component in relations among neighbours in the region, agreed that water resources should be developed in a sound manner that protects the ecosystem and does not cause mutual damage, with due regard for the interests of all parties concerned and in accordance with the principles of good-neighbourliness and mutual advantage. Such an approach will help raise the level of agro-industrial production, which is in keeping with the objectives of the United Nations food strategy for the twenty-first century.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan confirmed the need for concerted efforts to prevent environmental disasters and natural phenomena that threaten the security and means of livelihood of their populations.

9. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are focusing their attention on the development and further effective operation of the Transcaucasian Eurasian and the Trans-Asian transport corridors and the elaboration of an agreed tariff policy that conforms to international practice, since these corridors are a means of broadening trade and economic cooperation between the States of the region and the countries of Asia and Europe.

10. The sides noted the importance of improving the development and production of gas, petroleum and other natural resources in their countries, and of the need to take urgent measures to carry out joint projects for the laying of pipelines and construction of electric power lines for the transport of sources of energy to world markets. They emphasized that the diversification of their States' exports was fully in keeping with their strategic goals, and would enable each State to take its rightful place in the system of international relations and the strengthening of the international economy.

The sides unanimously expressed their satisfaction with the results of the meeting, which took place in a spirit of mutual understanding and trust.

The heads of State noted that the constructive and fruitful talks had substantially contributed to the development and strengthening of friendship among peoples and to broad cooperation in all areas.

President Saparmurat Niyazov expressed his cordial thanks to the leaders of the fraternal neighbouring States for their friendly support and good wishes for the people of Turkmenistan.

Presidents Nursultan Nazarbaev, Askar Akaev, Emomali Rakhmonov and Islam Karimov thanked the people of Turkmenistan and President Saparmurat Niyazov for their warm and hearty welcome and hospitality.

(*Signed*) N. **Nazarbaev**
President of Kazakhstan

(*Signed*) A. **Akaev**
President of Kyrgyzstan

(*Signed*) E. **Rakhmonov**
President of Tajikistan

(*Signed*) N. **Niyazov**
President of Turkmenistan

(*Signed*) I. **Karimov**
President of Uzbekistan

Ashgabat, 9 April 1999

United Nations A/54/81

General Assembly

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16 April 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Item 161 of the preliminary list*
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 16 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour and the sad duty to report that terrorism, aided, abetted, organized and instigated from Iraq, has taken yet another toll on the Islamic Republic of Iran; this time, Major General Ali Sayyad Shirazi, the Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

At 0645 hours on 10 April 1999, Major General Sayyad Shirazi was gunned down in front of his residence in Tehran as he was taking his son to school. A few hours later, the terrorist group known as Mujahedin Khalq Organization (MKO) claimed responsibility for that terrorist act. Major General Sayyad Shirazi was a national hero who had performed with bravery in defence of Iranian territory and with honour in Iraq's war of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran, in which the Iraq-based MKO served as mercenaries for the army of aggression and occupation.

You are no doubt aware that MKO, which is based in Iraq and operates in various countries under its own name or under fictitious organizations, such as the so-called "National Council of Resistance", or under the protective umbrella of a number of non-governmental organizations with consultative status in the Economic and Social Council, has claimed responsibility for many acts of terrorism against the Iranian people inside and outside the Islamic Republic of Iran, including attacks against Iranian officials, some even within the premises of the United Nations, as well as diplomatic and consular premises and the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations.

I wish to refer specifically to General Assembly resolution 51/210, which calls upon all States "to take steps to prevent and counteract, through appropriate domestic measures, the financing of terrorists and terrorist organizations, whether such financing is direct or indirect through organizations which also have or claim to have charitable, social or cultural goals" and also to counter abuse of these organizations, groups or associations by terrorists using them as a shield for their activities. The problem of terrorism is a global challenge

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requiring a global approach where collective decisions taken by all States within international organizations are taken seriously and enforced diligently and even-handedly.

It must be underlined repeatedly that all Governments and international organizations need to take the fight against terrorism seriously and implement the basic international guidelines against this global menace with regard to all perpetrators of terrorist crimes, without any distinction. Failure by Governments or international organizations to live up to their responsibility to prevent terrorists, their organizations and their front establishments from operating or residing in their territory or in any fashion using their territory constitutes a major impediment to the global struggle against this menace, which entails international responsibility.

I wish to reaffirm that the Islamic Republic of Iran unequivocally condemns all acts, methods and practices of terrorism, wherever and by whomsoever committed. At the same time, the Islamic Republic of Iran is prepared, as in the past, to cooperate with the United Nations and any other serious international effort aimed at combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 161 of the preliminary list for the fifty-fourth session.

(Signed) Mehdi **Danesh-Yazdi**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

UNITED NATIONS **A S**

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Fifty-fourth session
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MEASURES TO ELIMINATE INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 19 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I refer to the letters addressed to you from the Permanent Representatives of Syria (A/53/876-S/1999/326) and Lebanon (A/53/878-S/1999/333), both dated 24 March 1999. Given the overt similarities in style and content, which are not surprising, it might prove more than convenient to address both letters with a single response.

First, I wish to recall the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism of 1994 (General Assembly resolution 49/60, annex), whereby the international community reaffirmed that provoking terror is "in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations". I would also recall the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV), annex), which provides that sovereignty carries a responsibility not to allow terrorist acts to be organized or prepared in one's territory. In sum, supporting terror - under any pretext - is both morally repugnant and a violation of international norms.

The Syrian and Lebanese letters, like the policies of Syria and Lebanon on the ground, stand in direct contradiction to all of the aforementioned principles. By disguising terrorists in the false cloak of national resistance, these statements engage in an insidious form of complicity to terrorism.

In particular, the Lebanese Representative claims that Hizballah's "resistance" targets only the Israeli forces that operate in Lebanon. This is

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plainly false. Hizballah has targeted and murdered hundreds of innocent civilians throughout the world. Moreover, Hizballah's record of seizing hostages from many countries is a well established fact, known throughout the international community. As recently as December 1998, Hizballah launched a massive rocket attack against civilian towns and villages in northern Israel, destroying hundreds of buildings, injuring civilians, and forcing thousands into underground bomb shelters to escape the deadly barrage. The attempt by Lebanon and Syria to redefine this terrorism as "resistance" is an insult to the hundreds of victims of Hizballah's gruesome tactics over the years.

It should, moreover, be noted that Hizballah's own statements belie the picture that the Lebanese and Syrian Representatives are attempting to portray to United Nations Member States. Hizballah's leader, Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, announced recently that "Palestine is occupied territory and the Israeli presence there is an occupation entity and illegal. There is no end to the struggle with such a regime" (Joumhouri Islami, Iran, 6 March 1999). In other words, the "resistance" of Hizballah is not a "struggle for national liberation", as the Lebanese Representative would have Member States believe, but a campaign against the very existence of the State of Israel.

The blatant support of Syria and Lebanon for the terrorism of Hizballah is further confirmed by the language of these two letters, such as the suggestion in the Syrian letter that Hizballah's terrorism is a "legitimate struggle" and the Lebanese statement identifying Lebanon directly with Hizballah, renaming the group "the Lebanese National Resistance". Indeed, far from restraining Hizballah as it is obliged to do under international law, Lebanon has openly adopted the terrorist group as its own.

Israel has repeatedly expressed its willingness to implement Security Council resolution 425 (1978) in its entirety. In that resolution, the Council calls for not only the withdrawal of Israeli forces but also the restoration of international peace and security and the return of the effective authority of the Lebanese Government in that area. The declared willingness of the Syrian and Lebanese Governments to host an elaborate terrorist infrastructure, permit its regular reinforcement and endorse its operations directed against a neighbouring country is totally incompatible with the last two provisions of the resolution.

Lebanon refuses to negotiate with Israel on implementing resolution 425 despite Israel's continuing invitations to do so. Lebanon's Prime Minister reiterated this point on 14 March in a radio interview: "We are not at all ready to discuss with Israel any security arrangements or granting any guarantees" (Sawt al-Arab Radio, 14 March 1999). Therefore, Israel is left with no choice but to exercise its right to self-defence in accordance with international law.

It is particularly sad that the possibility of peace and security along the Israel-Lebanon border is being sabotaged by a third country, namely Syria, which in effect is holding the implementation of Council resolution 425 hostage to its own bid for territorial gains with Israel. The confluence of these two letters underscores the nature of this forced linkage.

Nevertheless, Israel once again calls on the Government of Lebanon to return to the negotiating table on implementing Council resolution 425. Israel also calls on the Government of Lebanon and the Government of Syria to resume negotiations with Israel in order to resolve all outstanding issues in the appropriate bilateral frameworks.

I should be grateful if you will have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 161 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ambassador Dore GOLD
Permanent Representative

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Fifty-fourth session
Item 43 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 19 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As the date of 4 May 1999 approaches, it is necessary to clarify the precise legal obligations of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) with respect to the interim arrangements created by the Oslo Accords in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. This clarification has been made particularly urgent since the international community has been recently exposed to repeated Palestinian arguments claiming that the transitional period will end on 4 May and hence a legal and political vacuum will ensue that should be filled by a unilateral declaration of a Palestinian state.

This argument is false. There will be no legal vacuum after 4 May 1999. The original hope of the parties was indeed to reach agreement on permanent status arrangements by 4 May 1999, while transitional interim arrangements were being implemented. But this was a suggested target date alone.

If the two sides do not succeed in concluding the permanent status negotiations by 4 May 1999, the interim arrangements will continue until these negotiations have been concluded. It should be emphasized that the interim Agreement explicitly prohibits the parties from changing "the status of the West Bank and Gaza Strip pending the outcome of the permanent status negotiations" (article XXXI; 7, emphasis added). This prohibition on changing the status of the territories is notably not linked to a specific date.

In short, the Oslo arrangements do not expire. Moreover, the status of the disputed territories is not to be altered until permanent status negotiations are completed. It is for this reason that the Interim Agreement contains a date for its entry into force but no date for its conclusion. It is also for this

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reason that 4 May 1999 is described, in the Israel-PLO agreements, as an "aim" or "mutual goal" and not as a fixed deadline.

This approach, in fact, is reflected in the actual practice of the parties to date. Where, in the course of implementing the Oslo Accords, the two sides have been unable to reach agreements by the specified target dates, the arrangements in force have continued to apply until the negotiation on the new arrangements have been concluded. This was the case with respect to the Gaza-Jericho Agreement in 1994 and the Hebron Protocol in 1997.

Finally, it should be stressed that the Palestinians have refused Israel's repeated invitation to negotiate a permanent status agreement. Therefore, they cannot now be permitted to rely on the absence of such an agreement, which they themselves prevented, to justify a unilateral declaration of statehood. The false argument of a vacuum is clearly being advanced in order to totally change the agreed terms of the peace process: to replace a negotiated resolution of Israeli-Palestinian differences with a unilateralist alternative. It should be recalled that PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat committed himself, in a letter to Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on 9 September 1993, to the principle that "all outstanding issues related to permanent status will be resolved through negotiations".

Similarly, Palestinian spokesmen are also referring to General Assembly resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947, as filling the purported vacuum that they allege will occur on 4 May 1999. Israel has repeatedly stated that this resolution was overtaken by events and therefore its recommendations have been characterized as null and void by repeated Israeli Governments. The only relevant United Nation resolutions governing the peace process are Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), which supersede Assembly resolution 181 (II) and call for the termination of the state of belligerence between the parties as well as the right of every State in the area to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries.

For this reason, a Palestinian unilateral declaration of statehood is more than simply an unlawful act. It is a rejection of the two fundamental principles of the peace process: the need to accommodate the legitimate rights of both sides and the recognition that this accommodation can only be achieved through negotiation. It would thus undermine the only framework that has proved capable of bringing about genuine changes in the situation of the Palestinian people - to the extent that today 97 per cent of the Palestinians of the West Bank and all the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip live under Palestinian not Israeli rule.

I should be grateful if you would have this document circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 43 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ambassador Dore GOLD
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/54/84

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 April 1999

Original: English

Fifty-fourth session
Item 20 (b) of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions

Letter dated 5 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you that on this day, Monday, 5 April 1999, President Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, has announced a comprehensive ceasefire all over the operations theatre in all the States of the southern Sudan. This ceasefire shall be effective as of 15 April 1999 following the date of expiration of the current partial ceasefire.

Furthermore, President Al-Bashir stated that this decision was taken with a view to preserving the lives, safety and property of the personnel of the United Nations humanitarian agencies and organizations, and to enable them to carry out their activities of relief delivery to the affected population in the desired manner.

I have the honour to request that the present letter be kindly circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 20 (b) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Elfatih Erwa
Permanent Representative

* A/54/150.

99-11876 (E) 280499

United Nations A/54/85

General Assembly

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26 April 1999
English
Original: Chinese and Russian

Fifty-fourth session
Item 75 of the preliminary list*
Prevention of an arms race in outer space

Letter dated 20 April 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of China and the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit the text of the Russian-Chinese communiqué adopted in Moscow on 14 April 1999 on consultations on issues relating to the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 75 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) **Qin** Huasun
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of China
to the United Nations

(Signed) Sergey V. **Lavrov**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the United Nations

* A/54/50.

99-11968 (E) 280499 280499

Annex

Russian-Chinese communiqué adopted in Moscow on 14 April 1999 on consultations on issues relating to the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems

In accordance with the agreement reached on 25 February 1999 between the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation and the Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, consultations on issues of strategic stability took place in Moscow on 14 April 1999 between Mr. G. E. Mamedov, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Mr. Wang Guangya, the Assistant Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China. Military and diplomatic experts from both sides took part in the consultations.

Particular attention was paid to discussion of the emerging situation relating to the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty). The basis for discussion of this problem was the mutual understanding, embodied in the Joint Statement of 23 November 1998 on the results of the Russian-Chinese summit meeting "Russian-Chinese relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century", regarding the exceptional importance of maintaining and strengthening the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, signed in 1972, which was and remains the cornerstone of the maintenance of strategic stability in the world.

The two sides expressed their serious concern that as a result of the plans announced in the United States of America for preparations for the deployment of a national anti-ballistic missile system, a serious risk is currently arising of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty being undermined. The implementation of such plans would be a violation of the basic obligation under the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, namely not to deploy anti-ballistic missile systems for a defence of the territory of a country and not to provide a base for such a defence.

The two sides consider that the undermining or violation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty would lead to a whole series of negative consequences — the emergence of new factors capable of bringing about destabilization of the international situation at both the global and the regional levels, and the creation of conditions for a renewal of the arms race and for additional obstacles on the road to progress in disarmament.

In the situation that is emerging, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China consider it necessary to draw the most serious attention of the international community to the consequences that might arise if the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty is violated.

On the basis of its traditional interest in the maintenance of strategic stability and the strengthening of international security, the People's Republic of China, which is not a party to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, proclaims its solidarity with the efforts of the Russian Federation to prevent the Treaty being undermined or circumvented. The Russian Federation, for its part, fully supports the efforts of the People's Republic of China to strengthen international and regional security. The two sides expressed concern that the implementation of the existing plans for the creation and deployment of an anti-ballistic missile system by a number of countries in the Asia and Pacific region may lead to an increase in tension in conflict areas in the Asia and Pacific region.

The two sides declare their readiness to continue, depending on the development of the situation, discussion and cooperation on issues relating to the maintenance of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and also on the problems in this respect.

United Nations A/54/86

General Assembly

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Fifty-fourth session
Item 75 of the preliminary list*
Prevention of an arms race in outer space

Letter dated 23 April 1999 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the text of a statement of 19 April 1999 by an official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation on the preparation in the United States of America of amendments to the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 75 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) S. **Lavrov**

* A/54/50.

99-11974 (E) 280499 280499

Annex

Statement of 19 April 1999 by an official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Despite the repeated assertions by the United States of America that it supports the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and wishes to make it more effective, the United States is deliberately continuing to prepare amendments to the Treaty with a view to giving the appearance of legality to the deployment — under the guise of a national anti-ballistic missile defence — of an anti-ballistic missile system for a defence of the territory of the country, which is unquestionably prohibited by the relevant provisions of that instrument. Particularly disturbing are Washington's attempts to present the matter, *inter alia* in the mechanisms whose task it is to ensure strict implementation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, as if the issue of these amendments was already resolved and all that remains is for the Parties to agree on their format.

In this connection we should like to emphasize once again that the Russian Federation will not participate, either actively or by remaining silent, in the discussion of amendments of this kind. The incorporation in the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of any amendments permitting the deployment of any form of anti-missile system for a defence of the territory of a country would be a violation of the central prohibition embodied in that Treaty, and hence would mean the de facto annulment of the Treaty itself, with all the negative consequences that would ensue therefrom — collapse of the entire structure of international treaties and agreements in the arms control field, undermining of the regime for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and others.